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Keeping In Touch with Our Teens

Wyatt Sawyer

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KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH OUR TEENS -- YOUTH

INT: Ecc. 1:9-11 teaches: NOTHING basically new!
Title presupposes a gap of some sort. Not new!

I. GAPS OF ALL KINDS ARE NATURAL TO HUMAN ORGANIZATION

- A. Age-gap. Diff. in 9 days, 9 mos, 9 yr. & 19 yrs
- B. Education-gap. Diff. in Kind. & 1st grade. etc.
- C. Knowledge-gap. Secular home-little Rel. know...
Child - adult Chr. home-much Bible knowledge..
- D. Social-gap. 1930 80% on Farm. Little social
child - adult 1971 80% in City. Much social.
Farm vs city people.

II. BIBLE DEALS WITH SOME OF THESE GAPS.

- A. Prov. 22:6 (Controversial) Gap between childhood and maturity POSSIBLE! Youth venturing, adventuring, experimenting. Not all--some!!
(It does not say: Train child and he will never depart. Says when he is OLD. he will not depart
Adolescent-gap maybe!
- B. Luke 15:11-32. Story of three gaps. Prodigals.
 - 1. Gap #1. Young son and Father. Lesser prodigal.
 - 2. Gap #2. Gap between sons. 1st shallow, 2nd mean and hateful.
 - 3. Gap #3 Elder son and Father. Inter. disease
- C. Family gaps. Ill. Me and mother. Me and Daphne. Me and Jeanne. Normal! Expected!
Races - Cultures - Sections - Customs - Backgrounds.
- D. GAP DEFINED TODAY: Differences in viewpoint, understanding, and communications. Means barriers, and obstacles to understanding, unity and cooperation. DUE MOSTLY TO PARENTAL NEGLECT AND ABANDONMENT OF CHILDREN IN HOME.
Ill. Wynnewood Hills area "good-will" visits.

III. CHANGE OF ECONOMICS & CULTURE CAUSED THE GAPS.

- A. Children and Families in Isolation VS Open Soc.
1930's - 1945
 - 1. ISOLATION SOCIETY. (Depression-low economy)
 - a. Finances: Little. Stayed at home. Close.
 - b. Big events: Radio serials, visits of relatives or friends, picture show, magazines.
(NO TV, plane trips, little gas money, vacations)
 - c. Nights: spent at home. No place to go.
 - d. School: class tournaments, plays, carnivals, rival-school games. Simple-but great! *over*

- e. Church: Meetings, big events, dinner on grounds, visiting preacher somebody! (Long good ole day)
- f. Information: flow was slower and less of it, SO less egotism, pride and sophistication.
- f. Kids: left to be kids. Lived their age. Less expected, less pressure. Less organized. (Less adult social-climbing through kids--unfair.)
- g. More togetherness: Stuck at home. Good. Picnics, short visits, peach-peelings, canning sessions. Movies at the park. Band concerts. Table games.
- h. HUMBLER way of life. Sons worked with dads on farm. Daughters learned HOME-MAKING from mother. Learned Titus 2:4-5. Dads-sons v. 6-8.* Whole family CONTRIBUTED to total well-being.
- i. LIFE: simpler, less sophisticated, and fundamentally more GENUINE, COMMON, and LOVABLE.

2. WIDE-OPEN SOCIETY. (Wealth & high economy)

- a. Affluency and Prosperity. Money to go. Cars to go. Places to go. Less at home. Less unity.
- b. Fewer BIG events: Diplomas at Kind, Elem. Jr. Hi., Sr. Hi. College and U. and 25 VBS diplomas along the way and 25 more BS promotion certificates. (TODAYS KIDS: have traveled more, seen more, know more) SO expect more, demand more, & crave more, more more)
- c. Home: is service station; not haven of peace hope, love and fulfillment. MORE: going to church, to school events, athletic games, commercial entertainment
- d. SCHOOL: Expected to give child HOME training. Not doing it; competing with church on Wed. nights and Sun nights often. (PTA, GAMES, COMMENCEMENT.)
- e. CHURCH: Open more. Providing more. Doing better job. Still fulfilling to many. Unfulfilling to those who DEMAND ENTERTAINMENT. Not there! Protestant churches and Catholics resorting to gimmicks; rock music, dances etc. to draw. Not drawing! Bible is disregarded in the name of "unity"--ignore diff. Many churches and ministers out of role: Protestors, supporters of Radical Movements-support Communists
- f. KNOWLEDGE: 1920 to 1970 world gained as much knowledge as it did from Year 0 to 1920. Knowledge doubles every 10 yrs. now. Bloats human brain and ego. Creates superficial inner-impression: "I know it all." Makes man proud, and unreasonable.

- g. Youth is over-organized.
 Little leagues, camps, bands, school teams
 Too competitive, too emotional & stressing
 Physically harmful; also emotionally.
 PARENTS: bringing adult life down to child
 Dances, swim parties, etc. 2nd grade. Cute.
- h. Family has scattered.
 Kids to school activities. Some church act
 Parents to church & social activities.
 Kids leaving home sooner "to get away".
 Today: Child-trading. Youth to Apts.
- i. Employment has weakened the family.
 Fathers moonlighting to "pay big bills."
 Mothers daylighting to keep up with Joneses
 Less togetherness, cohesion and unity-love
- j. LIFE: is more complex, restless, demanding
 superficial and less rewarding.

CONCLUSION: SUCH A LOOSE SOCIETY makes it
 most difficult to KEEP IN TOUCH WITH OUR
TEENS.

IV. SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS THAT MAY HELP.

1. Hold to those Christian Standards at all
costs. (Parents meet to control peers)
 Consistency in Example is key power!
2. TALK, TALK, TALK to children Reason,
 argue and discuss. (They merely testing
 your standards. Not repudiated you!)
3. ADMIT humanness; weakness and faults.
 You've never been parent before. They-child
4. BOOST: Church, school and home-all good!
5. Make HOME attractive to own children and
 neighborhood children (if want own home)
Ill. We bought TV to get ours home!!)
6. GO, GO, GO with children all you can, as
 wanted. Ill Window shopping-Memphis.
Ill. Football workout at 11:30 to 1:00 am.
7. KNOW what parents are expected to know
 about children: Friends, going, doing, ^{over}
 due back? Limits. Informed.

8. LEAN on Prayer to God, Bible, leadership of elders and wisdom of other parents.
9. KEEP: yourself physically strong (hobby & exercise), emotionally strong (pray, plan and change), mentally strong (read, think, meditate and learn), spiritually strong (faithful in Christian duties, Bible reading and helping others.)
10. REMEMBER: what your children want from you.

YOUR LOVE and the love of God.

YOUR ACCEPTANCE & RESPECT. Honor them as person. Individual.

YOUR CONCERN, but not your smothering

YOUR WISDOM, but in discussion not debate

YOUR BLESSINGS as they liberate themselves from you: Let rope out slowly but surely.

BASICALLY, this is the same pattern for the Good Life since the beginning.
 NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN!

Milwaukee 1971
San Jose 1971
West Plains 1971
Huntsville, Ala. 1971
Rockford, Ill. 2-14-73.
Newport Ark 3-13-73.
Odessa 4-11-73
Memphis, W. A. 5-6-73. 5100 class
Memphis Woodlawn 10-9-73 LBC
McAlester Okla 3-14-74
Amesville 10-9-74 LBC
White Rock Dallas 9-10-75 LBC.